

Message Text

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TAGS: SNAR, UNFDAC, BM
SUB: THE UNFDAC BURMA PROJECT--A STATUS REPORT

SUMMARY. THE UNFDAC BURMA PROJECT, A \$6.6 MILLION, FIVE-YEAR UNDER-TAKING BEGUN IN MID-1976, PROVIDES EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES TO SUPPORT BURMESE GOVERNMENT (GUB) PROGRAMS IN CROP SUBSTITUTION, ANTI-DRUG EDUCATION, ADDICT TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT. IT HAS GOTTEN OFF TO A SLOW START, AND IN SPITE OF THE INTENT TO UTILIZE THE BULK OF THE AVAILABLE FUNDS IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE PROJECT'S OPERATION, ONLY \$1.1 MILLION HAD BEEN SPENT BY THE END OF 1977. HOWEVER, THE PROBLEMS WHICH MARKED THE START-UP PHASE HAVE NOW BEEN LARGELY OVERCOME, AND MORE RAPID PROGRESS IS LIKELY IN 1978. END SUMMARY.

1. THE UNFDAC PROJECT IN BURMA IS VERY DIFFERENCT FROM THE PROJECT IN THAILAND, IN THAT IT INVOLVES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY THE PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND OTHER COMMODITIES TO THE GUB FOR USE IN PROGRAMS INITIATED AND IMPLEMENTED WHOLLY BY THE BURMESE THEMSELVES. IT IS NOT LIMITED TO ANY PARTICULAR GEOGRAPHIC AREA NOR ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL "DEMONSTRATION" VILLAGES OR THE LIKE. THE PROJECT HAS ONLY ONE EXPATRIATE UN EMPLOYEE
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IN BURMA, THE LIAISON OFFICER, AND A BURMESE STAFF OF ABOUT SIX EMPLOYEES, ALL OF WHOM ARE LOCATED IN RANGOON.

2. THE PROJECT AGREEMENT, WHICH WAS SIGNED IN MAY 1976, CALLS FOR AN UNFDAC CONTRICUTION OF \$6.6 MILLION OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, AND A GUB CONTRIBUTION OF A LIKE AMOUNT IN KYATS. THE DIVISION OF NARCOTICS DRUGS IS THE EXECUTING AGENCY FOR ALL

SEGMENTS OF THE PROJECT EXCEPT HEALTH (I.E., ADDICT TREATMENT), FOR WHICH WHO IS THE EXECUTING AGENCY. THE GOVERNMENT OF NORWAY IN JULY 1977 AGREED TO CONTRIBUTE \$5.4 MILLION TO THE PROJECT, A SUM WHICH COVERS THE FULL BUDGET OF ALL PROJECT SEGMENTS EXCEPT LAW ENFORCEMENT.

3. IN 1976 AND THROUGH THE END OF 1977, \$1.1 MILLION OF THE TOTAL PROGRAMMED UNFDAC CONTRIBUTION WAS EXPENDED. THE PLANNED EXPENDITURE IN 1978 IS \$3.8 MILLION. IF THIS GOAL IS MET, ABOUT \$500,000 PER YEAR WILL BE SPENT IN 1979, 1980, AND 1981. IT IS LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT SOME OF THE 1978 MONEY WILL BE UNSPENT AND REPROGRAMMED FOR 1979 OR LATER.

4. FOLLOWING IS A BREAKDOWN, BY PROJECT SEGMENTS, OF WHAT HAS BEEN SPENT THROUGH THE END OF 1977, WHAT HAS BEEN PURCHASED, AND WHAT IS PLANNED FOR 1978.

A. AGRICULTURE. THUS FAR, \$572,000 HAS BEEN SPENT FOR VEHICLES, FERTILIZER, PESTICIDES, SEEDS, AND SERICULTURE EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN THE GUB'S CROP/INCOME SUBSTITUTION EFFORT. PLANNED EXPENDITURE FOR 1978 IS \$1.1 TO BUY MORE OF THE SAME PLUS IMPROVED BREEDS OF CATTLE AND PIGS FROM AUSTRALIA. TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURE FOR THE AGRICULTURE SEGMENT IS \$2.2 MILLION.

B. EDUCATION. NOTHING HAS BEEN SPENT IN THIS SECTOR SO FAR, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BECAUSE OF SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON THE PART OF BOTH THE UN AND THE BURMESE, AND CONSEQUENT FAILURE TO AGREE ON A WORK PLAN. (THE BURMESE ASKED FOR SUCH THINGS AS SOCCER BALLS AND BAND EQUIPMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, WITHOUT EXPLAINING TO THE UN HOW THEY WERE TO BE USED IN THE ANTI-DRUG EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.) AGREEMENT ON THE WORK PLAN HAS NOW BEEN REACHED, HOWEVER, AND EXPENDITURE OF \$479,000 IS PLANNED FOR 1978 OUT OF A TOTAL OF \$704,000 FOR THIS SECTOR.

C. HEALTH. IN 1976 AND 1977, \$120,000 WAS SPENT ON LABORATORY EQUIPMENT FOR REGIONAL NARCOTICS TREATMENT CENTERS AND THE NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY IN RANGOON, AND ON REFURBISHING THE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OF THE NARCOTICS TREATMENT FACILITIES AT RANGOON AND MANDALAY. IN 1978, PLANNED EXPENDITURE IS \$349,000, FOR MORE LABORATORY EQUIPMENT AND CHEMICALS, TWO FOREIGN CONSULTANTS (ON NARCOTICS LABORATORY WORK AND ON DRUG EPIDEMIOLOGY), AND ON SIX OVERSEAS FELLOWSHIPS FOR BURMESE IN THE DRUG TREATMENT FIELD. TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURE IS \$950,000.

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D. SOCIAL WELFARE. THROUGH 1977, \$60,000 HAS BEEN SPENT ON VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT (SUCH AS SEWING MACHINES) TO BE USED IN THE GUB'S NARCOTICS REHABILITATION PROGRAM. IN 1978, \$484,000 IS PLANNED FOR SIMILAR ITEMS. THE TOTAL EVENTUAL EXPENDITURE IN THIS SECTOR IS SET AT \$1.0 MILLION.

E. LAW ENFORCEMENT. IN 1976/77, \$325,000 WAS SPENT IN THIS SECTOR, MOSTLY FOR VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE. PLANNED EXPENDITURE FOR 1978 IS \$846,000, FOR MORE VEHICLES, POLICE RADIOS, AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION'S FORENSIC LABORATORY. THE VEHICLES AND RADIOS ARE FOR USE IN EQUIPPING 29 POLICE STATIONS IN OPIUM-PRODUCING AREAS. TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURE FOR THIS SECTOR IS \$1.2 MILLION.

F. RANGOON OFFICE. THE REST OF THE BUDGET, APPROXIMATELY \$500,000, IS FOR PERSONNEL AND OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE PROJECT'S ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE IN RANGOON.

5. COMMENT. THE PROJECT HAS BEEN SLOWER THAN ANTICIPATED IN GETTING STARTED, AS IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY BOTH BURMESE AND UN OFFICIALS. THE ORIGINAL IDEA WAS THAT THE BULK OF THE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES WOULD BE PROCURED IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS,
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WITH THE FINAL THREE YEARS FOR ANY NECESSARY FOLLOW-ONS, REVISIONS, ETC. OBVIOUSLY, THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERABLE SLIPPAGE. A LARGE PART OF THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN THE BASIC

RELUCTANCE OF THE GUB TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE OR ADVICE OF ANY SORT UNLESS IT IS MANIFESTLY NECESSARY, AS WELL AS ITS DISTASTE FOR HAVING ANY FOREIGNERS LOOKING OVER BURMESE SHOULDERS. WHAT THE GUB WOULD LIKE, ESSENTIALLY, IS A BLANK CHECK. THIS, OF COURSE, THE UN IS UNABLE AND UNWILLING TO GIVE. ANOTHER DIFFICULTY HAS BEEN THE CUMBERSOME NATURE OF THE GUB BUREAUCRACY, COMPOUNDED BY THE NONE-TOO-EFFICIENT UN BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM. THERE WAS ALSO A PERIOD IN EARLY 1977 WHEN IT APPEARED THAT CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNFDAC WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE PROJECT'S BUDGET, AND TEMPORARY CUTBACKS WERE MADE. AND FINALLY, THERE HAS BEEN THE MISUNDERSTANDING AND LACK OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE THAT NATURALLY RESULTS WHEN SUCH DIVERSE ENTITIES AS THE GUB AND UNFDAC COME TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME ON COMMON GROUND.

6. HOWEVER, THE RECORD IS NOT ALL THAT BAD CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES. AFTER ALL, IT TOOK FOUR YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS, FROM 1972 TO 1976, TO CONCLUDE THE BASIC PROJECT AGREEMENT. THE PROJECT HAS ALREADY MADE SOME USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO DRUG CONTROL IN BURMA; AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, MOST OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH CAUSED INORDINATE DELAYS IN ITS FIRST 18 MONTHS OF OPERATION HAVE NOW BEEN OVERCOME. THE BURMESE FINALLY AGREED, FOR EXAMPLE, TO IMPLEMENT THEIR PROMISE TO SELECT AN EXPATRIATE LIAISON OFFICER FROM AMONG UN-PROPOSED CANDIDATES; HE HAS NOW BEEN IN RANGOON FOR THREE MONTHS AND IS ABLE GREATLY TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE BURMESE AND UN OFFICIALS IN GENEVA. VISITS OF TECHNICIANS (SUCH AS PAUL KATZ) HAVE RESOLVED SOME TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHICH AROSE; AND THE VISIT OF DND PROJECT OFFICER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VERHAGEN (GENEVA 818) APPARENTLY HELPED CONSIDERABLY IN CLARIFYING SOME MISPERCEPTIONS. THEREFORE, WE ARE REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT THE PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AT A MUCH FASTER RATE IN 1978 THAN IN THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF.

7. THE U.S. HAS A CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS FO THE UNFDAC BURMA PROJECT, BOTH BECAUSE OF THE PROJECT'S INTRINSIC WORTH AND BECAUSE WE CONTRIBUTE SUCH A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE OVERALL UNFDAC BUDGET. THUS WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR ITS PROGRESS. HOWEVER, THE BURMESE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO US THAT THEY WANT TO KEEP OUR BILATERAL NARCOTICS ASSISTANCE QUITE DISTINCT FROM WHAT THEY RECEIVE FROM THE UN, AND WE FEAR THAT ANY APPARENT MIXING OF THE TWO COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO BOTH. THERFORE, THIS MISSION HAS DELIBERATELY MAINTAINED A CERTAIN DISTANCE FROM THE UNFDAC PROJECT. WE; WE HAVE TRIED TO AVOID EVEN THE APPEARANCE OF MEDDLING. SHOULD IT BE ADVISABLE TO EXERCISE OUR INFLU-

ENCE WITH UNFDAC, THIS SHOULD BE DONE IN GENEVA RATHER THAN
IN RANGOON. SINCE THE PROJECT'S MAIN PROBLEMS NOW SEEM TO
HAVE BEEN RESOLVED, HOWEVER, WE SEE NO REQUIREMENT FOR U.S.
INTERVENTION AT THIS TIME.
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